

Population growth: economics and environment

[Sociology](#), [Population](#)



Macroeconomics refers to issues which influence a country's growth in terms of effecting positive impact. Microeconomic stability refers to the situation where by a country's economic conditions are favorable and therefore conditions are conducive for growth. Population growth is often portrayed as causing poverty and environmental degradation, and thus population control is seen as a means of improving living standards.

There is a growing concern amongst governments that the rate of population growth in most developing countries if not checked could continue jeopardizing the development in those countries by straining the budgets of those already struggling economies. Introduction. Population growth has been a subject of research for many decades as governments and other stakeholders seek means to bring population under check for it is widely assumed that it is related to poverty and environmental degradation.

This paper explores the interrelatedness of population growth, poverty, and environment from a general perspective. Population growth implies the increase in the number of human beings in a given population per unit time (Lia & Jesse, 1998). Even though population growth can refer to increases of number of members in any given species, this paper shall limit itself to the discussion of human population. Population growth can be attributed to several aspects such as immigration and due to births which is viewed as a natural process.

According to estimates from expert, the population growth in the world is currently at 200, 000 people per day. Out of the current growth estimates, over 70 % of the increase is taking place in the developing countries. It is

further estimated that, in the next 30 – 40 years, 2.6 billion people will be added to today's world estimate population of 6 billion people. Currently, 65 percent of all world's population lives on less than a dollar a day, in other words, in abject poverty.

This indicates a positive relationship between population growth and poverty in some areas. The relationship between the two variables lies in the fact that, human population depends on the environment for survival. If production remains constant over a long period of time but in turn the population keeps on increasing, it gets to a point where the land can support no more people therefore any additional population is bound to suffer from want.

This is especially so in the developing world where the main economic activity is dependent on land resources such as agriculture. It is worthy noting that, population can also affect environment in other ways like the sprouting up of slums as a result of disproportionate population growth. This in turn causes people to turn into environmentally unsustainable practices to earn income. On the other side this poses a threat to health since in some cases it strains urban infrastructure for instance the city of Nairobi, the city was designed to cater for a population of 1 million people, the current population is 3 times more. The resulting effect is that, the infrastructures as well as social amenities are overstretched and unless expanded proportionally, such pose negative challenges to the environment. It is not fair to link all population growth to poverty and environmental degradation. Taking the case of some Asian countries, they have experienced a population growth

and at the same time, improved living standards attributed to booming economies.

On the other hand, a country may experience population growth without the growth impacting negatively on the environment as long as corrective measures are taken to prevent environmental degradation. Effects of population in rural areas. Clearing forest or virgin land to pave way for cultivation to support the excess population is the commonest effect of population growth on environment. This becomes an environmental concern in that it may touch on water catchment areas as well as steep lands therefore catalyzing soil erosion.

The other effect could be ecological displacement of animal and plant species from their natural habitats. On the other hand population growth may result to poverty in that if the population depends on the land for income, population growth may mean over sharing of resources meaning that productivity of the land is affected (Silanga, 2003p. 565). This scenario is especially common in sub Saharan Africa where a big percentage of the population live in rural areas. However, not all such environment woes should be associated with population growth. Effects of population in urban areas.

This is of relevance since over half of the world population live in urban settlements and it is in the urban setting whereby population growth rate is high something occasioned by immigration as well as natural process. An exponential population growth may not reflect in jobs creation something which means that more and more people fall into the population trap since

they do not have meaningful full employment and are forced to live in semi permanent houses in slum areas. Environment may be affected by pollution resulting from economic and industrial processes.

Role of population control and population growth. Population control refers to the methods applied to populations to reduce the rate of increase of individuals in a population. Family planning is the commonest method. It involves use of biological methods such as pills, hormone injection as well as tubal ligation. It controls population growth in that, individuals can control their reproduction patterns and avoid giving births to unwanted and unplanned babies. This has proved successful almost everywhere in the world with some countries reporting negative population growths.

If proper population control measures are effected, the problems associated with population growth are solved hence the relevance of population control to population growth. Conclusion. The population - environment - poverty axis is a complex microeconomic issue phenomena which requires further research especially due to the fact that other factors affect the situation and any objective study must look into other factors in play as well. Meanwhile there is need for controlled population growth to check on population growth whose effect in most cases is negative.